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Chair: Mr. Tommo Monthe ..... (Cameroon)
Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Organization of work (A/C.5/72/L.30)

1. **The Chair** said that peacekeeping budgets were the main focus of the second part of the resumed session and a matter of critical importance to all delegations, as peacekeeping missions constituted the Organization's most concrete and visible tool for addressing conflict throughout the world. At the current part of the resumed session, Committee members would also review the rate of reimbursement to troop- and police-contributing countries, taking into account such matters as the need to improve predeployment training of troops; the complex nature of situations on the ground; issues related to the deployment of female uniformed personnel; challenges specific to the post-deployment phase; and incentives and penalties related to the condition of contingent-owned equipment. In addition to that heavy workload, the Committee would consider the reforms proposed by the Secretary-General in the areas of peace and security, management and development. He was aware of some delegations' concerns regarding the further consideration of those proposals at the current part of the resumed session in the time allotted. However, given that, at the main part of the current session, the Committee had recommended that the Secretary-General should be authorized to change from a biennial to an annual budget period on a trial basis, with preparations expected to begin in 2019, the Committee must take decisions on the proposed reforms as quickly as possible to enable their timely implementation. It could not to do so unless all relevant documents were issued in accordance with the established procedures. The Bureau would inform the Committee of progress in the issuance of documentation and make proposals regarding the use of the time allotted.

2. He invited the Committee to consider the proposed tentative and provisional programme of work for the second part of the resumed seventy-second session, established on the basis of the note by the Secretariat on the status of preparedness of documentation (A/C.5/72/L.30).

3. **Mr. Edrees** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, paid a tribute to the men and women serving in peacekeeping operations, in particular those who had lost their lives in the service of peace and security. The Committee must conclude its deliberations in a timely manner to ensure that peacekeeping operations were provided with the resources necessary to fulfil their mandates. While the Group supported the Secretary-General's reform proposals, the consideration by the Committee at the second part of the resumed session of matters unrelated to peacekeeping must be treated as exceptional and should not set a precedent.

4. While the Group acknowledged the efforts of the Bureau of the Committee to disseminate information as soon as possible, it was regrettable that a number of reports to be considered at the second part of the resumed session had been issued late or had not been translated into all official languages in a timely manner, which hampered delegations' preparations for their deliberations. He underscored the importance of multilingualism in that regard.

5. The Group attached great importance to consideration of the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of peacekeeping operations, in particular cross-cutting issues and the peacekeeping support account. At the current part of the resumed session, the Group would focus on ensuring that peacekeeping budgets were based on mission mandates and the real situation on the ground and were not approached as an arbitrary, across-the-board cost-cutting exercise; exploring options to find a fair solution to address unpaid assessments, accounts payable and other liabilities of closed peacekeeping missions so as to settle outstanding claims in missions with cash deficits; comprehensively addressing systemic challenges faced by troop- and police-contributing countries, including by ensuring a fair and realistic reimbursement rate; establishing necessary accommodations for female peacekeepers; guaranteeing adequate representation of such countries in Secretariat departments whose work was related to peacekeeping; and assessing how the Secretary-General's proposed reforms in the areas of management and peace and security would help the Organization fulfil its mandates and make it more fit for purpose and responsive to emerging challenges in the field.

6. **Mr. Alemu** (Ethiopia), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, expressed his condolences on the loss of Bernard Tanoh-Boutchoué, Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations. The Group supported the provisional programme of work on the understanding that it would be adjusted during the course of the session to reflect progress made in the Committee's negotiations.

7. At the current part of the resumed session, adequate time should be allocated to consideration of peacekeeping budgets, and the Secretariat must ensure that supplementary information requested by Member States was provided in a timely manner. The Group was concerned that the budget proposals for many peacekeeping missions reflected significant cuts, and would closely examine the basis of the proposals with a

view to ensuring the effective fulfilment of mandates and the security of peacekeepers. As the General Assembly had repeatedly indicated that peacekeeping budget proposals must be based on existing mandates approved by the Security Council, the Group would not agree to an approach that prejudged any mandate.

8. **Mr. Escalante Hasbún** (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that CELAC attached the utmost importance to the administrative and budgetary aspects of United Nations peacekeeping operations; it was vital for those operations to have the necessary resources to implement their mandates.

9. CELAC attached great importance to the reports on the financing of individual peacekeeping operations, in particular the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH); the overview of peacekeeping financing and cross-cutting issues; measures against sexual exploitation and abuse; the rate of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries; the support account; and management and peace and security reform. The Community would actively engage in the discussions on the Secretary-General's reports on management reform and on the revised estimates relating to the restructuring of the peace and security pillar, and requested the Secretariat to adhere to the resolutions establishing the scope of and guidelines for those reforms, in particular with regard to the preparation of the programme budget.

10. CELAC also looked forward to discussing the report on the budget performance of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) during the 2016/17 period and the proposed budget for MINUJUSTH for the 2018/19 period. Adequate resources should be provided to enable the continuation under MINUJUSTH of the programmatic activities previously carried out under MINUSTAH. Community violence reduction programmes and quick impact projects should also be maintained, given their crucial role in supporting core stabilization objectives in Haiti, particularly consolidation of the rule of law.

11. As each peacekeeping operation had a stand-alone budget, approved in accordance with its mandate and specific needs, peacekeeping budgets must be considered individually to ensure the effective and efficient discharge of mandates and adequate provision of resources to support programmatic activities.

12. It was regrettable that the Committee had been unable to agree on the necessary reform of the funding and backstopping arrangements for special political missions. The current administrative and budgetary arrangements for those missions were inadequate, and had an adverse impact on the regular budget and the accountability, governance and transparency of the Organization. Those deficiencies must be corrected, as called for by the Secretariat, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Board of Auditors.

13. By its resolution 65/293, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to submit proposals to address the issue of outstanding amounts due to Member States from closed peacekeeping missions that were in net cash deficit. The relevant current and previous reports must be considered and the issue resolved; Member States in arrears to closed missions must meet their financial obligations. Lastly, the Committee must complete its work on time and, to that end, the Secretariat should make every effort to submit reports within set deadlines in accordance with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

14. **Mr. De Preter** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Armenia, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova, said that documents must be made available in all official languages in a timely manner and that the Committee must conduct its deliberations during normal working hours.

15. As staunch supporters of peacekeeping, which was a core task of the Organization, the States members of the European Union were committed to ensuring that the United Nations maintained peace and security effectively and accountably, and that peacekeeping missions had the necessary resources to carry out their mandates in increasingly complex environments. The European Union commended the hard work and commitment of United Nations peacekeeping personnel under challenging conditions and paid a tribute to those who had lost their lives in the line of duty. It welcomed the Secretary-General's efforts to improve the performance, accountability, security and effectiveness of peacekeeping.

16. The primary goal of the Secretary-General's proposed reforms should be to improve the Organization's effectiveness. In that connection, the European Union welcomed the recent General Assembly and Security Council resolutions highlighting the importance of sustaining peace for preventing conflict. The Assembly must take action on all reform initiatives at the current session in order to enable implementation by 1 January 2019, as proposed by the Secretary-General. Given the heavy workload and the

far-reaching implications of the decisions to be taken at the current part of the resumed session, the European Union supported extending the time allotted for the Committee's deliberations.

17. **Mr. Velázquez Castillo** (Mexico) said that the Committee would be responsible for ensuring that peacekeeping operations had the financial resources needed to fulfil their mandates in situations of increasing complexity and security risks. Mexico appreciated the contributions of civil, military and police personnel participating in peacekeeping missions worldwide. The Committee must also take decisions on cross-cutting issues, special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, the Secretary-General's proposed reforms and the global service delivery model.

18. The current part of the resumed session provided a valuable opportunity to assess the status of implementation of the recommendations presented in the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (A/70/95-S/2015/446), in particular with regard to promoting multidimensional policy options and prevention and peacebuilding capacities and activities; advancing solutions in the areas of security, development and human rights; strengthening the role of women in peace processes; and addressing humanitarian issues, with communities and individuals as the ultimate beneficiaries, at each stage of the peace continuum, in cooperation with relevant actors and host States. General Assembly resolution 70/262 and Security Council resolution 2282 (2016), in which note had been taken of the Panel's recommendations, were at the core of the Secretary-General's proposal to reform the peace and security architecture and increase the effectiveness and coherence of the United Nations system by making sustainable peace the common thread that united the three pillars.

19. His Government was committed to contributing human and financial resources to peacekeeping operations. All Member States must honour their financial obligations to the Organization. In that regard, he recalled that the scale of assessments adopted by the General Assembly was designed to reflect Member States' capacity to pay and the special responsibilities of the permanent members of the Security Council for the maintenance of peace and security. His delegation would also seek to ensure that MINUJUSTH was provided with adequate resources to address challenges on the ground and to support Haiti in attaining stability and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, Mexico would promote the full implementation of the Organization's zero-tolerance policy towards sexual exploitation and abuse, with a particular focus on assisting victims, ending impunity, promoting the involvement of civil society and external partners, and strengthening strategic communications to enhance awareness and transparency.

20. In his report on management reform (A/72/492/Add.2), the Secretary-General outlined his vision for the future operation of the Secretariat, establishing a clear division between operational activities and activities related to policy design. Mexico noted with appreciation that no additional resources were requested to implement the proposals. It also welcomed the focus on activities in the field and on the need for increased delegation of authority to enhance the flexibility of procedures for mandate implementation, including the information and communications (ICT) strategy, while ensuring transparency and accountability. In addition, the Secretary-General's proposal to implement a global service delivery model by establishing shared regional service centres in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas would help decentralize the Organization's support services, improve the Secretariat's efficiency, functioning and response capacity, and, with the right equipment and staffing, enable more agile mandate implementation.

21. **Ms. Norman-Chalet** (United States of America) paid a tribute to the men and women who had served in peacekeeping missions, including those who had given their lives in the cause of peace. United Nations peacekeeping was essential to maintaining international peace and security. The Committee was responsible for working in partnership with the Secretariat to ensure that peacekeeping mandates were implemented in an effective, efficient manner and that uniformed and civilian personnel were held to the highest standards. Given that the majority of peacekeeping personnel were deployed in active conflict zones, improving efficiency, effectiveness and performance entailed ensuring the safety and security of peacekeepers; protecting civilians from violence; supporting the extension of State authority; and promoting human rights. Member States' significant investments in peacekeeping missions must produce demonstrable results in those areas.

22. Member States had a duty to ensure the efficient use of resources contributed by taxpayers. In that connection, her delegation was carefully examining the Secretary-General's proposed peacekeeping budget of $7.26 billion for 2018/19, which represented an overall decrease of less than one percent compared with the budget for 2017/18. She appreciated the Secretary-General's 2017 review of air operations, and other efforts of the Secretariat and peacekeeping missions to ensure a clear link between resources and mandated activities, achieve cost savings, and implement

structural changes to address inefficiencies. Peacekeeping budgets should represent actual requirements, be based on realistic planning assumptions and reflect benefits realized from ongoing management initiatives.

23. Her delegation supported the Secretary-General's efforts to improve overall mission performance, as well as the performance of individual civilian, military and police components and of support staff at Headquarters. Clear performance standards and accountability measures must be in place in order to inform Member States' decisions regarding mission resources. The United States was committed to initiatives that improved peacekeeping by ensuring the required capabilities; strengthening accountability for poor performance and misconduct, particularly sexual exploitation and abuse; enhancing mission leadership; improving planning and analysis; and integrating modern technology.

24. The effectiveness and efficiency of peacekeeping must be improved as part of broader organizational reform efforts. Her delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's commitment to reforming the United Nations and looked forward to considering how his proposed reform of the peace and security architecture would strengthen the Organization's ability to plan, manage and support missions and facilitate transitions. It would also examine the reporting lines proposed with a view to ensuring the alignment of policy and operations. The United States also looked forward to examining how the Secretary-General's management reform proposals would improve processes, strengthen accountability and make best use of the systems and strategies in place, including the Umoja enterprise resource planning system and the ICT strategy. She thanked the Secretary-General and his staff for seeking to ensure the alignment of all reform initiatives, including the global service delivery model, the ICT strategy and the accountability system.

25. **Mr. Munir** (Pakistan) said that peacekeeping was essential to the international community's efforts to address complex threats to peace, and had been instrumental in returning such countries as Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste to stability. Pakistan was one of the largest and most consistent contributors to peacekeeping, having provided over 172,000 troops, of whom 156 had made the ultimate sacrifice, since 1960. Over 6,000 Pakistani peacekeepers were currently active in various operations, and the headquarters of the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), which monitored the line of control in the disputed region of Jammu and Kashmir, was located in Pakistan for six months of the year. The Centre for International Peace and Stability in Islamabad trained peacekeepers from Pakistan and other troop- and police-contributing countries. Such contributions to international peace and security demonstrated the adherence of Pakistan to the ideals of the Charter.

26. Conflicts continued to rage around the world, civilian lives were under threat and people had been displaced by war and persecution. Peacekeepers now came under direct attack, which had previously been unthinkable; in 2017, 59 had lost their lives in violent acts, compared to 34 in 2016. As the threat changed, peacekeeping was also being transformed, which necessitated wisdom and courage. The mantra of doing more with less was unsustainable and did not address the complexity of the threat. Adequate financing was essential to mandate fulfilment, and underfunding compromised the safety and security of peacekeepers and civilians. The contributions to peacekeeping financing of the permanent members of the Security Council should be in keeping with their special responsibilities for the maintenance of peace and security, reaffirmed in General Assembly resolution 70/246. Political engagement, integrated solutions and conflict analysis were necessary to the success of peacekeeping missions. Consultations among all stakeholders were essential, and triangular cooperation between troop-contributing countries, the Secretariat and the Security Council must be improved. The Organization must take a capacity-driven approach to peacekeeping by providing professional training, appropriate equipment and well-thought-out strategies to ensure success on the ground. Accountability and transparency were essential to mandate reviews, which must be based on lessons learned from the past. Lastly, troop- and police-contributing countries should be represented at the leadership and senior levels in the field and at Headquarters in a manner commensurate with their contributions to peacekeeping. Pakistan would continue to serve as an agent of peace and security for those affected by conflict.

27. **Mr. Hoshino** (Japan) said that the Committee should give the highest priority at the current part of the resumed session to approving the peacekeeping budget by the start of the fiscal year on 1 July. The effective, efficient and accountable management of United Nations peacekeeping, which was ultimately funded by taxpayers, was essential to the Organization's sustainability and credibility. His delegation would scrutinize the Secretary-General's proposals to ensure that peacekeeping budgets reflected the resources actually required to fulfil Security Council mandates, and would seek detailed information regarding the ways

in which the Secretariat was held accountable for misconduct, particularly sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, in non-Secretariat entities that were funded through transfers from the peacekeeping budget. Such misconduct would undermine Member States' collective investment and the services of peacekeepers. The Secretary-General's reform must succeed; Member States must maintain the momentum, reach consensus and take a decision at the current session to overcome bureaucracy and make the United Nations more effective, efficient and accountable.

28. **Mr. Khalizov** (Russian Federation) said that, given the Committee's unprecedented workload at the current part of the resumed session, documentation must be issued in good time, in accordance with the established rules and procedures. The level of the proposed resources for peacekeeping and the associated administrative support structure for 2018/19 was somewhat lower than the appropriations approved in 2017, which had in turn been significantly lower than the Secretary-General's initial estimates that year. The search for further economies in peacekeeping should therefore be focused on increasing efficiency and accountability in the Secretariat and mission management, without prejudice to the fulfilment of Security Council mandates. Given the steady reduction in the resources allocated to peacekeeping, the process by which those resources were used to meet the Organization's needs should be monitored. When decisions were taken on the allocation of resources to missions, the specific characteristics of each mission should be considered.

29. His delegation looked forward to discussing the Secretary-General's proposed reform. All proposals for the reorganization of the United Nations should be addressed in a coordinated manner, and any decisions on the reform should be based on a clear understanding of the associated costs and consequences for the Organization's operations. The reform processes should be implemented in accordance with the current balance of powers between the Secretary-General and the General Assembly. The Member States must retain full control over the reorganization; in particular, the Secretariat's accountability to the intergovernmental bodies should be strengthened.

30. His delegation was concerned about the Committee's ability to take well-founded decisions on the matters before it, which also included the transparency of peacekeeping, the revised budget for the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, the global service delivery model and the implementation of the ICT strategy, in the short time allotted.

31. **Mr. Fu** Daopeng (China) said that peacekeeping operations were critical to maintaining international peace and security. In the 70 years since the start of United Nations peacekeeping, 1 million peacekeepers had participated in 71 operations and more than 3,500 had sacrificed their lives in the line of duty. China was the second largest troop-contributing country among the current Security Council members and the second-largest financial contributor. The 2,491 Chinese peacekeepers active in various operations worked diligently in complex security situations and harsh conditions to maintain peace and protect civilians, winning praise for the United Nations. China paid a tribute to all peacekeepers who had contributed to United Nations operations.

32. Financial resources were the foundation of the Organization's governance. The Committee should take a factual, scientific and prudent approach to peacekeeping budgeting to provide the necessary financial resources for the fulfilment of Security Council mandates. Although the Secretary-General's initial 2018/19 peacekeeping budget proposal had been lower than amount appropriated in 2017/18, he had subsequently submitted additional requirements for the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), which had resulted in the 2018/19 budget being slightly higher than that of the previous period. The Board of Auditors' recommendations on the previous year's peacekeeping budget would serve as a reference to Member States in considering the current proposal, and should be promptly implemented by the Secretariat.

33. The Secretary-General's reforms, which must serve the interests of the Member States and strengthen the role of the United Nations in the global governance system, should be based on extensive consultations to maximize consensus; safeguard the purposes and principles of the Charter and the basic norms governing international relations; address developing countries' concerns; and improve the Organization's delivery capacity and operational efficiency. The restructuring of the Secretariat should increase efficiency and effectiveness, enhance coordination, facilitate Member State participation in and guidance on the allocation of budgetary resources and internal management, and strengthen accountability and oversight. The reform should have no time limit; the pace should depend on the quality of the proposals and the progress of consultation with Member States. The reform programme must be based on sound arguments, fully validated and thoroughly discussed by the Member States to identify the most scientific, operable initiatives.

34. The concerns of host countries and troop- and police-contributing countries must be addressed, and the principles of the Charter and of United Nations peacekeeping operations must be upheld. Peacekeeping missions must respect the sovereignty of and communicate better with host countries to win those countries' trust and to work smoothly. The Secretary-General's steps to advance gender equality had brought visible results; as troop- and police-contributing countries had made significant contributions to United Nations peacekeeping and were familiar with the operation of peacekeeping missions, the Secretariat should give priority to their candidates in the recruitment of peacekeeping staff.

35. The financial difficulties of the United Nations must be overcome. The Organization faced severe financial challenges, with a glaring discrepancy between its limited financial resources and the need to strengthen its role. The peacekeeping budget was also greatly in arrears; Member States must pay all assessments on time, in full and without conditions. Countries with the capacity to pay, particularly those with considerable amounts outstanding, should do so as soon as possible. The Secretariat must strengthen budget management, respect the budget limit, exercise financial discipline and utilize resources more efficiently to make the best use of every penny contributed by taxpayers. The delays in the preparation of documentation for the current part of the resumed session would affect the Committee's deliberations. The Secretariat should issue documents as early as possible to support the consultations.

36. **Ms. Medina** (Norway) said that the current part of the resumed session could be the most decisive in decades. Decisions must be made on two interlinked reforms that were essential to improving the United Nations response to challenges in international peace and security, and on the global service delivery model, the accountability system, and the organizational and budgetary changes needed for a major shift in the Organization's working culture. The Committee must also respond to the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative. With regard to the peacekeeping budget, Member States had a shared interest in ensuring that missions were properly equipped and resourced. Although her delegation would focus on UNMISS, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), MINUJUSTH, UNSOS and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), whose headquarters were in countries in which Norway had a long-standing engagement, it would participate in the negotiations on other peacekeeping operations and on cross-cutting issues, since all missions were equally important in "rightsizing" the overall budget. Her Government supported a robust United Nations peacekeeping budget. It was committed to budgetary discipline and the optimization of peacekeeping resources, but warned against arbitrary cuts that undermined the fulfilment of mandates. As the Committee needed sufficient time to conclude its discussion of the many matters before it, she urged the Bureau to formally extend the current part of the resumed session.

37. **The Chair** said that he took it that the Committee wished to approve the proposed programme of work on the understanding that adjustments would be made as necessary during the course of the session.

38. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 5: Election of the officers of the Main Committees

39. **The Chair** said that Mr. Yazdani (Islamic Republic of Iran) had resigned from the office of Vice-Chair of the Committee with effect from 22 March 2018. In accordance with rule 105 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the Committee was invited to elect a new Vice-Chair from the Asia-Pacific States for the unexpired term. Those States had endorsed the nomination of Mr. Gohar (Pakistan). In the absence of other candidates, he took it that the Committee wished to proceed with the election by acclamation.

40. *It was so decided.*

41. He took it that the Committee wished to elect by acclamation the candidate proposed, with effect from the date of election to the end of the current session.

42. *It was so decided.*

43. *Mr. Gohar (Pakistan) was elected Vice-Chair of the Committee by acclamation.*

Agenda item 149: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Updated financial position of closed peacekeeping missions as at 30 June 2017 (A/72/649 and A/72/838)

Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda (A/72/639, A/72/777 and A/72/789/Add.9; A/C.5/72/21 and A/C.5/72/23)

44. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the Secretary-General's report on the updated financial position of closed peacekeeping missions as at 30 June

2017 (A/72/649), said that the report provided information regarding 29 missions. As at 30 June 2017, 24 missions had had net cash surpluses, totalling $85.3 million, and 5 had had net cash deficits, totalling $86.0 million. Pending the receipt of outstanding assessed contributions, troop-contributing countries were owed $62.9 million. The Secretary-General had made proposals in his reports on the updated financial position of closed peacekeeping missions at the sixty-sixth, sixty-seventh and sixty-eighth sessions (A/66/665, A/67/739 and A/68/666) to address the outstanding dues to Member States in respect of contingent-owned equipment and letters of assist for closed missions with cash deficits. He had also proposed, in his reports on the matter at the sixty-seventh, sixty-eighth, sixty-ninth and seventieth sessions (A/67/739, A/68/666, A/69/659 and A/70/552), to address cash issues in active missions by authorizing temporary cross-borrowing between such missions. As an alternative, he had proposed the establishment of a working capital fund for peacekeeping operations (A/68/666, A/69/659 and A/70/552). As the General Assembly had deferred consideration of those proposals, the Secretary-General in his current report provided a factual update on the financial information contained in his previous reports (A/68/666, A/69/659, A/70/552 and A/71/652).

45. Cash surpluses had been used to alleviate occasional shortfalls in active operations in the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). Peak borrowings, which usually occurred in July and August, had declined from $43.0 million in August 2014 to $35.1 million in July 2017. Although circumstances had improved in recent years, some active missions, particularly MINURSO and UNMIK, needed to borrow temporarily from closed missions to meet cash shortages owing to outstanding assessments. The balance of cross-borrowings at the end of March 2018 had been $22.5 million. The liquidity of active operations was not directly linked to cash surpluses in closed missions, but, given the liquidity problems faced by some active missions, particularly MINURSO and UNMIK, the Secretary-General maintained the proposal made in his previous reports that the General Assembly should authorize temporary borrowing between active missions, or that a working capital fund should be established to address the cash requirements of active peacekeeping operations. If no new mechanism was approved, the General Assembly was requested to allow the retention of the net cash balance in 24 closed peacekeeping missions as at 30 June 2017.

46. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/72/639) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (A/72/777) for the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda, she said that the Centre provided the participating missions with shared services, including transactions related to human resources, finance, movement and control, personnel and cargo transport, and ICT support. The centralization of those functions meant that they could be carried out more effectively as a result of process integration, specialization, standardization and re-engineering. The Centre's clients were eight peacekeeping operations and seven special political missions. Since November 2016, the Centre had also provided payroll services to the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS).

47. The Centre had standardized administrative processes and had been particularly involved in the implementation of Umoja, most recently the deployment of cluster 5 and the launch of the asset and property management modules, and the East African corridor supply chain management project. For the 2018/19 period, the proposed organizational restructuring of the Centre would result in the provision of more customer-centric, standardized, timely and high-quality services. The proposed 2018/19 budget was $35.2 million, 6.7 per cent more than the approved resources for 2017/18. The increase was attributable mainly to the application, under civilian personnel, of lower vacancy rates for international staff and United Nations Volunteers, partly offset by a net reduction of 19 posts and positions.

48. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the updated financial position of closed peacekeeping missions as at 30 June 2017 (A/72/838), said that the General Assembly, in its decision 71/546 C, had deferred until the current session consideration of the six previous reports of the Secretary-General (A/66/665, A/67/739, A/68/666, A/69/659, A/70/552 and A/71/652) and of the Advisory Committee (A/66/713, A/67/837, A/68/837, A/69/827, A/70/829 and A/71/856) on the updated financial position of closed peacekeeping missions. The Advisory Committee reiterated its observations and recommendations on the proposals made by the Secretary-General since the sixty-sixth session. The

Assembly had repeatedly called for Member States to pay their assessed contributions on time, in full and without conditions. The decline in peak levels of borrowing by active peacekeeping missions reflected more timely receipt of such contributions. The Advisory Committee recommended that the net cash balance proposed for retention to cover the temporary borrowing needs of active missions should be reduced to $40.0 million, the highest level of borrowing in the previous three calendar years, and that any available cash surplus over that amount should be returned to Member States.

49. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda (A/72/789/Add.9), he said that the Advisory Committee's recommendations would entail a reduction of $2,225,900 in the proposed budget of the Centre. The Secretary-General proposed the reorganization of the Centre into four service delivery sections, which would result in a number of staffing changes. The Advisory Committee recommended the abolishment of a post of Service Delivery Manager established as part of the restructuring proposed by the Secretary-General in the 2017/18 period, which had not been implemented. It also recommended against the proposed establishment of two other posts. Under civilian personnel, the Advisory Committee recommended that the proposed 2018/19 vacancy rates for international staff, National Professional Officers and national General Service staff should be brought into line with actual vacancy rates. The Advisory Committee made other observations and recommendations in its report, including under operational costs.

50. **The Chair** drew attention to the notes by the Secretary-General on the approved resources for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (A/C.5/72/21) and on the proposed budgetary levels for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (A/C.5/72/23).

51. **Mr. Alsayed** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the cash deficits in several closed peacekeeping missions as a result of Member States' non-payment of arrears had caused the prolonged, unacceptable non-payment of amounts owed to other Member States, particularly troop- and police-contributing countries. Member States were obliged under the Charter to pay their assessed contributions in full, without conditions and in a timely manner. Member States in arrears with their assessed contributions to closed peacekeeping missions should pay them expeditiously. He requested the Secretary-General to include, in his future reports on the matter, complete information regarding the Member States in arrears and the amounts due in respect of the 29 closed operations. The Group was also concerned about the continued borrowing from closed missions to meet the cash requirements of active missions, which also resulted from Member States' failure to pay their assessed contributions. In General Assembly resolution 65/293, the Secretary-General had been requested to submit proposals to address outstanding payments to Member States in respect of closed operations with cash deficits. The Group stood ready to explore options for sustainably solving the problem.

52. The Regional Service Centre had done important work in providing human resources, administrative and financial services to missions in the region, and the Group looked forward to thorough consideration of the Centre's 2018/19 financing at the current part of the resumed session. The Group welcomed the participation of the Centre in the East African corridor project, and looked forward to obtaining more information regarding the scope of the project and the ways in which it could be expanded beyond the six missions currently involved.

53. The Group welcomed the proposed reorganization of the Centre, in line with the recommendations made in the independent review of the shared services managed by the Department of Field Support, into four service-delivery sections. Before the new arrangement was introduced, however, the Group would seek further information regarding the reasons for which the restructuring proposed for 2017/18 had not been fully implemented. The new structure should be adequately staffed and the Centre should have the resources needed to work effectively. The nationalization of Field Service posts should resume as soon as possible. The Group would seek clarification regarding the extent to which the Centre's governance structure was consistent with the decision in General Assembly resolution 69/307 to give the Centre operational and managerial independence. The Secretary-General should review the coordination between the Transportation and Movements Integrated Control Centre and the Strategic Air Operations Centre at the United Nations Logistics Base in Brindisi, Italy, and clarify the transfer of functions to the Transportation and Movements Integrated Control Centre.

54. **Ms. Nalwanga** (Uganda), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the Centre's operational and managerial independence should be enhanced and permanent financing should be obtained. Given the General Assembly's investment in the Centre, the Centre's role in peacekeeping operations, including the processing of personnel benefits, mission support services, procurement and training, should be strengthened. The Group welcomed the implementation

of the East African corridor project, which should be expanded to include procurement for all peacekeeping missions in Africa. It looked forward to the enhancement of the shared services provided by the Centre and commended the Secretary-General on reorganizing the Centre as recommended in the independent review.

55. Speaking as the representative of Uganda, she said that the Centre had largely realized the Secretary-General's vision for the provision of shared services and now served more missions than any other such centre. The provision of complementary services at a single location had saved time, been cost-effective and made the Centre a one-stop shop for troops and field personnel to follow up on their entitlements. In addition, the expertise brought together at the Centre was not lost when missions were closed. The experience gained at the Centre during the implementation of the global field support strategy had provided a foundation for the expansion of shared service provision throughout the Secretariat. She hoped that the benefits of the Secretary-General's significant investment in training and infrastructure at the Centre would be harnessed by the General Assembly during the implementation of the global service delivery model.

Agenda item 150: Financing of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (A/72/644, A/72/730 and A/72/789/Add.13)

Agenda item 153: Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (A/72/628, A/72/735 and A/72/789/Add.3)

56. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/72/644) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (A/72/730) for the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), said that the proposed 2018/19 budget of $271.1 million was 1.7 per cent higher than the approved 2017/18 resources. UNISFA would continue to support the implementation of the Agreement of 20 June 2011 between the Government of the Republic of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement on Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of the Abyei Area, allowing for returns and ensuring the protection of civilians and support for the peaceful administration of the Area, as well as support for the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism in creating a safe and demilitarized border zone. In relation to mission support, UNISFA would focus on camp improvements, environmental enhancements, security installations and the maintenance of access roads. The Force proposed to harmonize its mission support structure with those of other field missions.

57. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/72/628) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (A/72/735) for UNFICYP, she said that the proposed 2018/19 budget of $55.2 million was 2.1 per cent higher than the approved 2017/18 resources. The increase was attributable primarily to the appreciation of the euro against the dollar and a one-off construction project to accommodate the relocation of military personnel. The Force's activities would continue to focus on creating conditions conducive to the achievement of a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus issue and a return to normal conditions.

58. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2369 (2017), a strategic review of UNFICYP had been conducted, the findings and recommendations of which were set out in the report of the Secretary-General on the matter (S/2017/1008). The proposed budget took into consideration the recommendations, which had been endorsed by the Council in its resolution 2398 (2018) and included a reduction in the military component, the repatriation of the contingent-owned armoured personnel carriers, the relocation of military personnel and the establishment of a Joint Mission Analysis Centre.

59. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's report on UNISFA (A/72/789/Add.13), said that the Advisory Committee's recommendations would entail a reduction of $1.7 million in the proposed budget for the Force. The Advisory Committee recommended the abolishment of four civilian posts that had been vacant for over two years and reductions in the proposed requirements for maintenance services and official travel. UNISFA should adjust vehicle holdings to comply with the standard vehicle ratios.

60. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on UNFICYP (A/72/789/Add.3), he said that the Advisory Committee's recommendations would entail a reduction of $713,100 in the proposed budget for the Force. The Advisory Committee recommended the approval of the Secretary-General's staffing proposals. It also recommended the application of a vacancy rate of 10 per cent to the cost estimates for international staff and reductions in the resources requested under facilities and infrastructure, training, and communications and information technology.

61. **Mr. Alemu** (Ethiopia), speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that a number of delegations had

visited peacekeeping missions in Africa in April 2018 and seen at first hand the challenges those missions faced in the areas of security and safety; facilities and infrastructure, including accommodation; logistical support; and medical facilities. The Group would scrutinize the budget proposals to ensure that those issues were addressed.

62. According to the Secretary-General's report on the overview of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/72/770), the United Nations currently supported 16 active peacekeeping operations, comprising 13 missions funded under individual special accounts; two long-standing missions, UNMOGIP and the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), which had been established under the programme budget; and UNSOS.

63. For the 2017/18 period, the total proposed budgets had amounted to $7,972 million for peacekeeping operations, while the total approved resources had been $6,803 million. The proposed budget for 2018/19 was $277 million lower than the level proposed for the 2017/18 financial period and $980 million lower than that proposed for the 2016/17 period. Between the 2016/17 and 2018/19 periods, changing conditions in mission areas had resulted in the closure of three missions.

64. The Group welcomed the Secretary-General's call, at the African Union summit of January 2018, for African peace enforcement forces to be given adequate support, including strong mandates from the Security Council and predictable funding. With regard to the request in General Assembly resolution 70/286 for the Secretary-General to report on measures taken to expand the participation of women in peacekeeping operations, he was concerned that only 3 per cent of United Nations peacekeepers and 10 per cent of police were women, but welcomed the increase, from 22 per cent in 2016 to 46 per cent in 2017, in the proportion of women appointed heads and deputy heads of missions.

65. Quick-impact projects played an important role in supporting the implementation of mission mandates, and should be implemented in a timely, responsible and accountable way. The Group recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution 65/293, had requested the Secretary-General to present concrete proposals and alternatives to address the perennial issue of outstanding dues owed to Member States from closed peacekeeping missions with cash deficits.

66. The Committee faced a heavy workload, but hard work, dedication, frankness and transparency in its deliberations would facilitate the timely conclusion of its work. The Group wished to discourage recourse to negotiations in small configurations behind closed doors; the work of the Committee should be conducted in an open and inclusive manner. The Committee should also complete its work within the allotted time.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.

United Nations A/C.5/72/SR.36

General Assembly
Seventy-second session

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Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 36th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 8 May 2018, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Tommo Monthe ..... (Cameroon)
Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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18-07400 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 154: Financing of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (A/72/638, A/72/638/Corr.1, A/72/778, A/72/784, A/72/784/Add.1, A/72/789/Add.11 and A/72/844)

Agenda item 157: Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (A/72/622, A/72/718 and A/72/789/Add.4)

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Agenda item 162: Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (A/72/623, A/72/731 and A/72/789/Add.1/Rev.1)

Agenda item 164: Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 1863 (2009) (A/72/650, A/72/763 and A/72/789/Add.6)

1. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/72/638 and A/72/638/Corr.1), the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (A/72/784 and A/72/784/Add.1) and the note on financing arrangements for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (A/72/778) for the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), said that the Secretary-General had proposed additional requirements of $47.9 million for 2017/18, as substantial changes had had a significant impact on the capacity of the Mission to implement its mandate. Those changes were connected with the Mission's efforts to support the revision of the electoral register, to provide technical and financial support for the presidential and legislative elections to be held in December 2018, to reinforce the security of United Nations premises and to ensure the protection of civilians following several attacks, and with other unforeseen operational requirements.

2. The Secretary-General had proposed a budget of $1.153 billion for the maintenance of MONUSCO in 2018/19, based on the recommendations of the 2017 strategic review of the Mission, which included the need to support the political process to pave the way for credible, inclusive and peaceful elections and to focus on the protection of civilians. That reprioritization had resulted in the streamlining of civilian tasks, the development of a new architectural framework to ensure a comprehensive approach to the protection of civilians, and a shift towards a "protection through projection" approach, while maintaining a static presence where required, thus enabling a small force to cover a large geographical area, which would be critical during the electoral period. In addition, a commitment authority of $84.5 million had been requested to enable the Mission to support the electoral process and assist the Independent National Electoral Commission in adjusting its operational strategy, as mandated by the Security Council in its resolution 2348 (2017). The related estimated additional resource requirements were based on a comprehensive and integrated plan and the information available at the time of preparation of the proposal.

3. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/72/622) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (A/72/718) for the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), she said that a budget of $37.9 million was proposed for 2018/19, representing an increase of 0.1 per cent over the 2017/18 budget. UNMIK would continue to strengthen and consolidate peace, security and stability in Kosovo and the surrounding region and to carry out projects and activities to fulfil its mandates, including the promotion and protection of human rights and the rule of law, and the building of trust between communities. As part of the efforts to mitigate the environmental impact of its operations, UNMIK was installing solar energy systems, monitoring groundwater, carrying out wastewater analysis, planting trees and conducting awareness-raising campaigns.

4. Introducing the budget performance report of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/72/640 and A/72/640/Corr.1), she said that, pursuant to Security Council resolution 2333 (2016), the Mission would be liquidated by 30 June 2018. In 2016/17, UNMIL had incurred $182.8 million in expenditure, against approved resources of $187.1 million, an implementation rate of 97.7 per cent. The reduced requirements were primarily due to the drawdown of uniformed personnel and lower operational costs owing to reduced requirements for air and ground transportation, the early decommissioning of a naval vessel, the closure of sites and the utilization of existing inventory. Those reductions had been partially offset by higher-than-planned payments to staff members on separation from service or relocation to another duty station and the promulgation of new salary scales for national staff.

5. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/72/663) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to

30 June 2019 (A/72/746) for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), she said that the proposed budget of $1.099 billion represented an increase of 4.9 per cent over the 2017/18 budget. The pace of implementation of the peace agreement remained slow and unpredictable, owing in part to slow engagement among the signatory parties, the increasing role of spoiler groups, and insecurity in the north and centre of the country due to the presence of violent extremist armed groups. Civil unrest had increased and armed clashes between signatory parties had repeatedly taken place.

6. The Mission's priorities for 2018/19 were the provision of support for the implementation of the peace agreement; the protection of civilians, particularly in the north and centre of the country; and the extension of State authority, including through increased support for the Malian Defence and Security Forces, whose capacities were expected to increase. It was assumed that the Malian Defence and Security Forces would progressively deploy throughout the country and develop an improved capacity to mitigate explosive threats, including through the disposal of explosive ordnance and improvised explosive devices and the management of weapons and ammunition. However, their capacities, and those of key government institutions, would remain too weak to independently reassert State authority in the north and strengthen it in the centre or to prevent a further deterioration of the security, humanitarian, human rights and development situation. The support of the international community, including the Group of Five for the Sahel, remained essential.

7. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/72/623) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (A/72/731) for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), she said that a budget of $53.9 million was proposed for 2018/19, an increase of 3.6 per cent over the 2017/18 budget. Given that security was a growing concern for the Mission and the parties to the conflict, MINURSO had reinforced the security of team sites east of the berm. Additional mitigation and prevention measures were proposed for 2018/19, with a view to reducing risk and allowing the Mission to implement its mandate. In terms of environmental activities, the Mission would implement the third phase of the borehole drilling project, which would address the logistical challenges and security vulnerabilities of transporting water to team sites.

8. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/72/650) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (A/72/763) for the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS), she said that a budget of $568.7 million was proposed for 2018/19, a decrease of 2.3 per cent over the 2017/18 budget. UNSOS would continue to provide logistical support to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), including through the expansion of mission enabling units to all sectors to increase the efficiency of delivery along the main supply routes. Through the Mine Action Service, UNSOS would continue to support AMISOM with improvised explosive device threat mitigation options through mission enabling units, sector mobility operations, explosive-detection dogs and explosive hazard clearance capacity. UNSOS would undertake critical security upgrades; relocate its premises at Mogadishu International Airport to a distance of 150 metres from the runway, as requested by the Government of Somalia to meet International Civil Aviation Organization safety standards; improve camp infrastructure; and undertake environmental enhancements. UNSOS proposed to harmonize its mission support structure with that of other field missions.

9. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the reports of the Advisory Committee on the budget performance for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 and proposed budget and additional resource requirements for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 of MONUSCO (A/72/789/Add.11) and the financing arrangements for MONUSCO for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (A/72/844), said that the Advisory Committee recommended the approval of the additional resources requested for 2017/18 to meet the needs of the Mission in connection with the forthcoming elections. The Advisory Committee recommended the abolishment of 21 long-vacant posts and recommended against the establishment of two Professional posts. It also recommended further reductions under facilities and infrastructure, official travel and air operations.

10. With regard to the Secretary-General's request for a commitment authority for the 2018/19 period in connection with technical assistance and logistical support for the electoral process, the Advisory Committee recommended approval of an authorization to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding $80 million and expected that, should unexpected resource needs arise, they would be fully absorbed within existing resources, and that information on actual expenditures incurred would be presented in the Mission's performance report for the period.

11. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on UNMIK (A/72/789/Add.4), he said that the cash position of the Mission failed to cover the three-month operating cash reserve. The Advisory Committee recommended that a vacancy rate of 10 per cent should be applied to the cost estimates for international staff, as that rate was closer to the actual rate. The Advisory Committee had indicated in its previous report on UNMIK that the Mission had made efforts to adjust the number of vehicles to the projected requirements for each personnel category within the limits of the standard ratios. In that connection, he recalled the Advisory Committee's previous recommendation that similar efforts should be undertaken across all peacekeeping missions.

12. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on UNMIL (A/72/839), he said that, while the Mission had achieved a budget implementation rate of 97.7 per cent, actual expenditures had diverged significantly from the planned budget. The Advisory Committee recommended that the Secretariat should provide a more realistic budgeting methodology for future missions undergoing drawdown and liquidation, and build on lessons learned. Those lessons should be included in the revised edition of the liquidation manual being developed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support.

13. The Advisory Committee noted the progress made on environmental management during the performance period and trusted that all future sites to be closed would be handed over in compliance with the guidance issued by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support. The Advisory Committee trusted that the Mission would continue to apply environmentally friendly practices, including treating contaminated soil and disposing properly of unused sea containers. As an exceptional measure, the Advisory Committee supported the proposal that the General Assembly should authorize the Secretary-General to use the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund for cash flow purposes in respect of expenditures identified after the closure of the Mission, with the prior concurrence of the Advisory Committee, and to report thereon in the final performance report.

14. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on MINUSMA (A/72/789/Add.14), he said that the recommendations of the Advisory Committee would entail a reduction of $6.7 million to the proposed budget. Under civilian personnel, the Advisory Committee recommended against the establishment of one Field Service post. The Advisory Committee had also recommended reductions under official travel, facilities and infrastructure, air operations, communications and information technology and training. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the actions to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with MINUSMA were set out in section V of its report. The Advisory Committee had concurred with the Controller's request to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding $43,174,000 gross to meet the requirements for the additional military and police personnel authorized by the Security Council in its resolution 2295 (2016).

15. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on MINURSO (A/72/789/Add.1/Rev.1), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of $527,400 to the proposed budget. Under operational costs, in view of the pattern of expenditures, the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of 5 per cent to the resources for facilities and infrastructure and communications and information technology.

16. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on UNSOS (A/72/789/Add.6), he said that the recommendations of the Advisory Committee would entail a reduction of $2.6 million to the proposed budget. The procurement audit carried out by the Board of Auditors at the request of the Advisory Committee had identified several issues, such as a total overexpenditure of $64.5 million under the transportation of rations for 2015/16 and 2016/17, and expenditures of a total of $19.2 million for three financial periods without budgetary provisions. UNSOS should improve its management of the outsourcing contract with the third-party contractor and the provision of medical services.

17. The Advisory Committee recognized the challenging environment in which UNSOS operated. Nevertheless, the Advisory Committee shared the view of the Board of Auditors that UNSOS must strengthen internal controls and enforce accountability over procurement and contract management. The Advisory Committee expected that lessons would be learned and applied in future management of all contracts by UNSOS and other peacekeeping missions. Concerning the proposed redeployment of 183 posts and the realignment of 208 posts, the Advisory Committee recalled that UNSOS had undergone a series of reorganizations in recent years, including redeployments and realignments. The Advisory Committee was of the view that UNSOS must focus on its operations without continuous reorganizations of its structure.

18. **Mr. Traore** (Mali), paying tribute to the memory of those who had lost their lives in the crisis in Mali, said that the Organization owed it to them, and to the people striving to bring peace and stability to the

country, to ensure that MINUSMA had sufficient resources, particularly in the light of Security Council resolutions 2295 (2016) and 2364 (2017), which had strengthened the Mission's mandate and increased its force levels.

19. There should be a greater focus on protecting MINUSMA personnel and helping the Malian Defence and Security Forces to protect civilians, in the light of the increase in asymmetric attacks against international and Malian troops and civilians. His delegation took note of the Mission's mine-detection and mine-clearing programme, which was focused on explosive threat mitigation. MINUSMA must be properly equipped with aerial systems to enable it to monitor and protect large areas. In addition, armoured personnel carriers should be replaced with mine-protected vehicles.

20. To bring an end to the crisis in Mali, action was required at the regional level. Greater cooperation with the Group of Five for the Sahel and its Joint Force was needed. His delegation urged MINUSMA to continue reducing its environmental footprint and to involve local communities in natural resource management initiatives. In that connection, he welcomed the establishment of the group of friends leading on environmental management in the field.

21. **Mr. Davies** (Liberia) paid tribute to the memory of Bernard Tanoh-Boutchoué, Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations.

22. While it was important to prevent conflicts and maintain peace, many parts of the world were already engulfed in conflict. The international community must help to bring peace to those areas. His delegation was immensely appreciative of the contribution made by the United Nations and its Member States to bringing peace to Liberia. UNMIL had been one of the largest peacekeeping operations in the history of the United Nations, with over 126,500 military officers, 16,000 police officers and 23,000 civilian staff deployed in total. Peacekeepers must be ready and able to deal with the ever-changing nature of conflict, secure in the knowledge that they had the full support of the international community.

23. Liberia had moved from hosting a peacekeeping mission to being able to help other States, such as Mali. Thanks to the support of the Organization, Liberia had held three successful elections, in 2005, 2011 and 2017. While UNMIL had successfully completed its mandate, there was a need to continue supporting the new United Nations country team in Liberia as it accompanied the country on its journey to achieving sustainable peace.

24. **Ms. Nikodijevic** (Serbia) said that her delegation attached great importance to the activities of UNMIK in Kosovo and Metohija, where it had gained the greatest measure of trust among the Serbian and other non-Albanian communities. Its continued presence was of paramount importance because of its status-neutral approach, based on Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). Owing to the long-standing lack of inter-ethnic trust, the Mission's presence was indispensable to building lasting peace, stability and security and to implementing the agreements reached between Belgrade and Pristina in the framework of the European-Union-facilitated dialogue. In the light of recent events in Kosovo and Metohija, the Mission's mandate should be maintained and the scope of its activities enhanced.

25. Calls for savings should not result in unjustified reductions to the Mission's budget, as that would have an adverse effect on its role in preserving stability in the area it covered and in the wider region. The United Nations must take a proactive approach to the question of Kosovo and Metohija. Serbia was opposed to attempts to marginalize the Mission within the Organization. The personnel and financial capacities of UNMIK must be strengthened to enable it to implement its mandate.

26. On 26 March 2018, so-called "Kosovo police" had interrupted a peaceful gathering held in Kosovska Mitrovica in the context of the internal dialogue on Kosovo and Metohija and had brutally arrested the Director of the Office for Kosovo and Metohija of the Government of Serbia, Marko Đurić. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia had written to the President of the Security Council to inform him of the incident (see S/2018/274). The Secretary-General, in his most recent report on UNMIK (S/2018/407), had noted that "a number of developments during the reporting period have heightened tensions and negatively impacted relations between Belgrade and Pristina" and that "the conduct of Kosovo police during a high-profile operation such as the arrest of Mr. Đurić, which resulted in a number of injuries, is cause for concern". The Secretary-General had added that "a thorough inquiry is needed into the events of 26 March, with corrective action in case of failures to uphold human rights".

27. That incident, coupled with the murder of Kosovo Serb politician Oliver Ivanović, confirmed the seriousness and the volatility of the security situation in Kosovo and Metohija and the importance of the Mission's continued presence. In his report on UNMIK (S/2018/407), the Secretary-General had said "I note, with concern, the slow pace of progress of the investigation" adding that "So long as credible answers and justice are not obtained, mutual suspicions and

perceptions of insecurity will continue to undermine efforts to build trust among communities throughout Kosovo".

28. Some 19 years after the establishment of UNMIK, there were still 200,000 internally displaced people living in the central part of Serbia, having fled Kosovo and Metohija because of threats and persecution. Owing to numerous attacks on Kosovo and Metohija Serbs and their property and cultural heritage, a matter to which the Mission should pay greater attention, only 1.9 per cent of that number had been able to return. Indeed, according to the report of the Secretary-General, between 17 January and 15 April 2018, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees had recorded just three voluntary returns to Kosovo by members of non-majority communities.

29. Her delegation was disappointed that UNMIK continued to experience high vacancy rates. All vacant posts must be filled expeditiously, as recommended by the Advisory Committee in its report (A/72/789/Add.4). Failure to fill vacancies was a violation of General Assembly resolution 71/303 on the financing of UNMIK. Her delegation did not agree with the Advisory Committee's recommendation to apply a higher vacancy rate to the cost estimates for international staff. Its recommendation was based on the actual vacancy rate for international staff, which was misleading as the rate was artificially high owing to constant delays in the recruitment process. She wondered why the Advisory Committee had made such a recommendation, given that the discrepancy between budgeted and actual vacancy rates at UNMIK had existed for many years. If applied, the recommendation would result in a reduction of over $700,000 to the proposed resources. She reiterated her country's strong support for the allocation of adequate resources for the programmatic activities and confidence-building projects through which UNMIK sought to improve the rule of law, human rights and reconciliation among communities, which were areas of key importance to the realization of its mandate.

Agenda item 136: Programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 (*continued*) (A/72/7/Add.47 and A/72/371/Add.9)

Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (*continued*)

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

30. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the revised proposed resource requirements for 2018 for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) (A/72/371/Add.9), said that the General Assembly, in its resolution 72/262, section XXII, had taken note of paragraph 36 of the report of the Advisory Committee (A/72/7/Add.14) and had decided not to approve the budget proposal for UNAMA (A/72/371/Add.4); however, it had decided to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in the amount of $82.9 million for the period from 1 January to 30 June 2018. The Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to present an updated budget proposal at the second resumed part of its seventy-second session.

31. The updated budget proposal for 2018 amounted to $151.4 million, a decrease of $12.7 million compared to the approved resources for 2017. In its resolution 2405 (2018), the Security Council had extended the mandate of UNAMA until 17 March 2019. The previous budget for 2018 had proposed resources in the amount of $140.4 million; the variance of $11 million was mainly due to revised assumptions regarding civilian incumbency and changes to standard salary costs for international staff.

32. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/72/7/Add.47), said that the Secretary-General's updated budget proposal represented an increase of $11 million compared with the original proposal. The Advisory Committee had made a number of recommendations on matters including vacancy rates. With specific regard to civilian personnel, the Advisory Committee was recommending against the proposed establishment of three posts in the Donor Coordination Section. In terms of operational costs, the Committee was recommending adjustments to the resource requirements for consultants and ground transportation. Regarding the UNAMA Support Office in Kuwait and the Kuwait Joint Support Office, the Advisory Committee continued to question the validity of maintaining two separate structures. It recalled that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/248, any changes to the existing and future service delivery model must be approved by the Assembly.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.

United Nations A/C.5/72/SR.37

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Summary record of the 37th meeting
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Chair: Mr. Tommo Monthe ..... (Cameroon)
Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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Agenda item 138: Improving the financial situation of the United Nations (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 138: Improving the financial situation of the United Nations (*continued*)

1. **Ms. Beagle** (Under-Secretary-General for Management), accompanying her statement• with a digital slide presentation, said that she would focus on four main financial indicators: amounts of assessed contributions, unpaid assessed contributions, available cash and outstanding payments to Member States in respect of three budget categories: the regular budget, peacekeeping and the international tribunals. At 31 December 2017, the cash balances had been positive for peacekeeping and the tribunals, but the regular budget had experienced shortfalls in the last quarter, a troubling pattern that had emerged in recent years. At 30 April 2018, cash balances had been positive for all categories.

2. Concerning the regular budget, letters of assessment had been issued in 2018 at a level of $2.5 billion, $91 million lower than in 2017, and $1.5 billion in payments had been received by 30 April 2018. Unpaid assessments had amounted to $1.6 billion at that date, $166 million higher than one year earlier. By the end of 2017, 145 Member States had paid their regular budget assessments in full, the same number as at the end of 2016. She urged the remaining Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full as soon as possible, as the final financial picture for 2018 would depend on their actions in the months ahead. Following the issuance of the assessment letters at the start of 2018 and in response to the Secretary-General's call for Member States to meet their financial obligations to the Organization, 88 Member States had paid their regular budget assessments in full by 30 April 2018. Since that date, five more Member States had done so.

3. The cash resources available for the regular budget under the General Fund included the Working Capital Fund and the Special Account, which had been used to cover the shortfalls affecting the regular budget in the final months of 2017. The final position as at 31 December 2017 had reflected a $278 million cash shortfall under the regular budget. Regular budget cash had increased to $330 million as a result of the contributions from Member States in the first quarter of 2018, but would, if the month-by-month pattern for 2016–2018 continued, decline as the year progressed and deteriorate at the end of the year. In view of the limited available reserves, the final cash position at the end of 2018 would depend largely on payments from Member States in coming months.

4. Changing demand for peacekeeping activities made it difficult to predict the financial requirements of peacekeeping operations. In addition, the financial period of those operations differed from that of the regular budget in that it ran from 1 July to 30 June rather than for the calendar year. Moreover, letters of assessment were issued separately for each operation and for different periods throughout the year.

5. Unpaid assessments for peacekeeping operations had totalled $1.9 billion at the end of 2017 and $2.3 billion at 30 April 2018. So far in 2018, new letters of assessment in the amount of $1.5 billion had been issued and payments of approximately $1.1 billion had been received.

6. With regard to outstanding payments to Member States providing troops and contingent-owned equipment, the total amount owed had decreased to $796 million at the end of 2017 from $810 million at the end of 2016, while the amount outstanding at 30 April 2018 had amounted to $1.2 billion. While the Secretariat made every effort to expedite outstanding payments to Member States, such payments depended on income received from assessments. The amount currently outstanding reflected payments to be drawn from additional appropriations of $416 million for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and $86 million for the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH), which had been approved in December 2017 and for which letters of assessment had been issued in January 2018. Additional payments owed for troops deployed in UNAMID and the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) were scheduled for the following week and further payments of $506 million were expected by the end of the second quarter of 2018.

7. The Secretary-General was committed to meeting obligations to Member States providing troops and equipment as expeditiously as the cash situation permitted. The Secretariat monitored the peacekeeping cash flow situation constantly with a view to maximizing payments, but depended on Member States' meeting their financial obligations and on the expeditious finalization of memorandums of understanding with troop-contributing countries.

8. Since 30 April 2018, one more Member State had paid all its peacekeeping assessments. The total outstanding amount comprised $1.9 billion owed for active missions and $414 million for closed missions.

• Subsequently circulated as document A/72/522/Add.1.

Of the amount owed for active missions, $798 million related to letters of assessment issued in 2018 while $1.1 billion related to letters issued in 2017 and earlier.

9. She thanked the 29 Member States that had paid all peacekeeping assessments in full as at 31 December 2017, particularly because letters of assessment were issued throughout the year for different missions whenever the Security Council renewed the respective mandates. As at 30 April 2018, 38 Member States had paid all peacekeeping assessments in full. Since that date, payments had been received from 8 more Member States, bringing the total to 46.

10. Although the total cash available for peacekeeping had amounted to $3 billion at the end of 2017, comprising approximately $2.7 billion in the accounts of active missions, $177 million in closed mission accounts and $138 million in the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund, that amount was segregated in accordance with the decision of the Assembly to maintain separate accounts for each mission. The Assembly had specified that no peacekeeping mission should be financed by borrowing from other active peacekeeping missions. The use of the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund was restricted to new operations and expansions of existing operations.

11. As at 31 December 2017, 114 Member States had paid their assessed contributions for the international tribunals in full; other Member States were urged to follow their example. Outstanding assessments had amounted, as at 31 December 2017, to $47 million, and, as at 30 April 2018, to $83.2 million, including payments owed in respect of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, for which letters of assessment had last been issued in 2016. As at 30 April 2018, 162 Member States had paid their assessments in full for that Tribunal, 70 had done so for the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and 66 had done so for the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals; other Member States were encouraged to follow their example. The month-by-month position of cash balances for the tribunals had been positive from 2016 to 2018. Once again, the final outcome for 2018 would depend on Member States' continuing to honour their financial obligations for the tribunals.

12. She drew the Committee's attention to the preliminary results of the ongoing audit of the financial statements of the United Nations as reported in volume I, comprising operations funded from the regular budget and voluntary, capital, tax equalization, insurance and other funds, for the year ended 31 December 2017. The results of the audit of the financial statements of peacekeeping operations as reported in volume II for the 2016/17 period were reflected in the relevant report of the Board of Auditors A/72/5 (Vol. II). Following the implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS), the Secretariat had made every effort to enhance transparency and access to financial information. The financial statements provided a holistic picture of the Organization's cash flows, assets and liabilities.

13. Assets had amounted to $8.3 billion for volume I and $5 billion for volume II, mostly cash and investments, and property, plant and equipment. After the deduction of liabilities, the net assets had amounted to $2.1 billion for volume I and $789 million for volume II. Revenue for volume I had amounted to $6 billion, while expenses had amounted to $5.8 billion, resulting in a surplus of $292 million. Revenue for volume II had amounted to $8.275 billion, while expenses had amounted to $8.264 billion, resulting in a surplus of $11 million.

14. In conclusion, she expressed gratitude to the 41 Member States that had paid all assessments in full. The financial health of the Organization depended on Member States' meeting their financial obligations in full and on time. The Secretariat, for its part, pledged to use the funds entrusted to it in a cost-effective manner and to provide information in the most transparent way possible.

The meeting rose at 3.25 p.m.

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Summary record of the 38th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 14 May 2018, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Tommo Monthe ..... (Cameroon)
Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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18-07719 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 149: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy
(A/72/648, A/72/783 and A/72/789/Add.10)

1. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the Secretary-General's reports on the budget performance of the United Nations Logistics Base (UNLB) at Brindisi, Italy, for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/72/648) and on the budget for UNLB for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (A/72/783), said that the proposed 2018/19 budget amounted to $87.3 million, an increase of 7.8 per cent compared with 2017/18, attributable mainly to the appreciation of the euro against the United States dollar, and the impact of that change in terms of estimated national staff costs and the higher post-adjustment factor for international staff. In 2018/19, UNLB would continue to provide peacekeeping missions with supply-chain, logistics and information and communications technology services. The Secretary-General was proposing a restructuring of the existing Service for Geospatial Information and Telecommunications Technologies, which would be renamed the Field Technology Service. The proposed 2018/19 budget included a revised concept of operations for strategic deployment stocks, in accordance with the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) (see A/71/798) and of the Advisory Committee (see A/71/836/Add.10), which the General Assembly had endorsed. The outcome of the review of the concept of operations for strategic deployment stocks appeared in Annex III to the report on the budget for UNLB for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (A/72/783).

2. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/72/789/Add.10), said that the Advisory Committee recommended an overall reduction of approximately $1.8 million in the proposed budget for 2018/19. It was recommending against the reassignment and reclassification of a P-4 contracts management officer to the P-5 level; recommending against the conversion to posts of 30 General Service temporary positions; and proposing further reductions covering five operational categories: official travel; facilities and infrastructure; ground transportation; communications and information technology; and other supplies, services and equipment. The Advisory Committee wished to reiterate its recommendation that UNLB should adjust its vehicle holdings to ensure compliance with standard vehicle ratios.

3. Recommending that the General Assembly should defer action on the revised concept of operations for strategic deployment stocks, the Advisory Committee took the view that the Secretary-General should have presented more detailed information to enable it to make comments and recommendations on the subject for consideration by the General Assembly.

4. **Mr. Ismail** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group continued to believe in the need to improve the functioning of UNLB, and had taken note of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors regarding redeployment of resources; strategic flight coordination services; procurement and contract provisions; the Galileo decommissioning project, and environmental matters. It would seek further information from the Secretariat regarding the follow-up to those recommendations, and would examine carefully the proposal to restructure and rename the Service for Geospatial Information and Telecommunications Technologies, and the implications of it being located in Brindisi and Valencia. Echoing the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the Group called for transparency with respect to the functions, financial resources, and distribution of staff between the two locations. Recalling that the General Assembly, in its resolutions 69/307 and 70/286, had requested the Secretary-General to develop a scalability model for UNLB, the Group expressed regret that the model remained confined to the Field Technology Service, and called on the Secretary-General to provide further details of the model's resource implications.

5. The Group concurred with the view of the Advisory Committee that the Secretary-General should have presented more detailed information, as well as a thorough analysis, of the proposed revised concept of operations for strategic deployment stocks. It recalled the recommendation of OIOS that alternative locations for the holding of such stocks should be considered, and would like to learn how the issue of obsolete strategic deployment stocks had been addressed in the proposal and what obstacles to holding the stocks in a location close to peacekeeping missions were foreseen by the Secretariat.

6. While aware of the complementarity between the roles of UNLB in Brindisi and the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe in supporting peacekeeping missions, the Group perceived a lack of clarity in the roles of the Strategic Air Operations Centre at Brindisi and Transport and Movements Integrated Control Centre at Entebbe. It therefore wished to echo the

recommendations of the Advisory Committee regarding a review of the coordination between the Brindisi and Entebbe centres and the transfer of some functions from Brindisi to Entebbe, and would follow the issue closely in the Committee's informal consultations.

Agenda item 160: Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East

(a) United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (A/72/633, A/72/633/Corr.1, A/72/719 and A/72/789/Add.2)

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (A/72/630, A/72/776 and A/72/789/Add.5)

7. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/72/633 and A/72/633/Corr.1) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (A/72/719) for the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), said that the proposed 2018/19 budget amounted to $61.8 million, an increase of 7.3 per cent over the approved 2017/18 budget, attributable mainly to increased deployment of troops and armoured personnel carriers as part of the phased return of the Force to the Bravo side. In 2018/19, the Force would increase the deployment of military personnel to the Bravo side and prepare for the reoccupation, if conditions permitted, of select vacated observation posts and positions, which would be required to provide logistical support and facilitate access to medical evacuation routes. Additional resources had been proposed, to provide one environmental officer (to ensure environmentally friendly operation with regard to energy, water and waste management) and two engineers (to assist with the maintenance and refurbishment of the facilities on the Bravo side).

8. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/72/630) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (A/72/776) for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), she said that the proposed 2018/19 budget amounted to $482.8 million, a decrease of $160,400 over the approved 2017/18 budget. The proposed budget reflected the recommendations of the strategic review of UNIFIL, conducted in 2017 in accordance with Security Council resolution 2305 (2016). The strategic review's findings and recommendations, including the reconfiguration of the Maritime Task Force, had been presented in the letter of 8 March 2017 addressed by the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council (S/2017/202).

9. The activities of UNIFIL would continue to focus on restoring peace and security in southern Lebanon, and on maintaining liaison and coordination activities, in particular through the tripartite mechanism, to advance the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). In addition, pursuant to Security Council resolution 2373 (2017), UNIFIL would enhance the visibility of its presence within its existing mandate and capabilities, and enhance reporting on operational matters.

10. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the budget performance from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 for UNDOF (A/72/789/Add.2), said that the Advisory Committee was recommending approval of the proposed 2018/19 budget, subject to an adjustment of just over $50,000, reflecting the Advisory Committee's observations and recommendations regarding vacancy rates and lower operational costs deriving from a reduced provision for vehicle rental. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the budget performance from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 for UNIFIL (A/72/789/Add.5), said that the Advisory Committee was recommending approval of the proposed 2018/19 budget, subject to a reduction of $1.9 million, reflecting the Advisory Committee's observations and recommendations regarding vacancy rates applied to international staff and National Professional Officers, reassignment and redeployment of staff, reductions in operational costs relating to facilities and infrastructure; other supplies, services and equipment; and official travel.

11. **Mr. Awad** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation wished to reiterate, as it did every year, that it welcomed the deployment of UNDOF, having offered the Force every support since its inception. The Syrian Arab Republic continued to respect the Disengagement of Forces Agreement as a temporary measure, pending the implementation of the relevant international resolutions stipulating the withdrawal of Israel, the occupying Power, from the entire area of the occupied Syrian Golan, to the 4 June 1967 line. While the role of UNDOF was important, its presence must not be regarded as an alternative to addressing the primary causes of the conflict, namely, putting an end to the occupation in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and General Assembly. His delegation wished to reiterate that the funding of UNDOF must be the responsibility of the Israeli side, as

the occupying Power, in accordance with the principles of General Assembly resolution 1874 (S-IV).

12. The Secretary-General's reports must remain neutral and unpoliticized when describing the situation in the area of separation, reflecting reality on the ground without favouring one side at the expense of the other. However, the 2016/17 budget performance report (A/72/633 and A/72/633/Corr.1) and the proposed 2018/19 budget (A/72/719) had completely ignored the reason for the deterioration in the security situation on the Bravo side, namely terrorist operations carried out by armed groups related to Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Al-Qaida, such as the Nusrah Front. It was unfortunate that the authors of the reports insisted on terming those groups "non-State armed groups", thereby disregarding the fact that the Security Council had designated them as terrorist groups. Israel provided them with indirect support, as confirmed in the report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on UNDOF, and with direct support, by attacking Syrian sovereignty every time the Syrian Arab army, in cooperation with its friends, achieved victories against those groups. Such support ultimately led to a continued escalation and continued tension in the area of separation, jeopardizing the lives of UNDOF staff and hampering UNDOF in the fulfilment of its mandate.

13. His delegation welcomed the return of UNDOF to some of the positions that it had previously vacated. His Government had fully supported the Force's redeployment in the area of separation, an important step in maintaining stability in that area, and reiterated its call for the Force's full return to all its former positions. UNDOF must abide by its mandate, which was different from that of other United Nations operations in the area. In the light of that fact, reports relating to the Force must avoid any reference to those other operations. His delegation reiterated the need to comply with the Disengagement of Forces Agreement as well as the agreement on basic operational procedures governing the Force's work in regional cooperation, management practices for recruitment, the establishment of posts and the definition of post functions In that connection, his delegation would make known during the informal consultations its concerns relating to some of the posts proposed by the Secretary-General. It stressed the need to avoid any overlap between the work and mandate of UNDOF, which was of a of military nature, and the work of other United Nations operations in the region that had a political or humanitarian character. The situation must not be exploited to expand cooperation among United Nations operations in other sensitive areas, especially in light of the volatile conditions in the region; his delegation would consider any departure from the mandate of UNDOF as interference in the internal affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic and a violation of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic remained committed to the Disengagement of Forces Agreement and appreciated the role played by UNDOF in the area of separation. It looked forward to the achievement of a full and just peace in the region, in accordance with the relevant international re olutions. It urged members of the Fifth Committee to approve in full the resources requested for UNDOF.

14. **Mr. Wax** (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that he had not originally intended to take the floor, but could not allow the baseless claims and allegations made against Israel by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to go unchallenged. Once again, an attempt was being made to politicize the discussions of the Fifth Committee. The words of the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic displayed shocking audacity in the light of his country's record of attacking its own people using unconventional and chemical weapons. It was unfortunate that that representative was not confining his comments to the issues of substance before the Committee; he might wish to consider contributing, as Israel did, to advancing the Fifth Committee's work on the wide range of issues covered at its sessions, rather than raising an unchanging list of political points.

15. **Mr. Awad** (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that he would not ordinarily have taken the floor again, but felt compelled to do so by the reaction of the representative of Israel to a statement on UNDOF that was similar in form and content to the statement on UNDOF made in previous years, and that focused on examining the reports of the Secretary-General. It was the representative of Israel who was showing audacity in attempting to divert attention away from Israel's frequent crimes. As the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, he had not been adopting a position, but rather providing a reflection of General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and United Nations documents which condemned Israel's actions. The current meeting was neither the time nor the place to enumerate them, and they were no secret. Israel's support for terrorist groups was also no secret, as that country's representative would see if he attended meetings of the Security Council devoted to UNDOF and if he examined reports of the Secretary-General devoted to UNDOF and referring clearly to ISIL and the Nusrah Front. The document reference numbers could easily be provided.

If the representative of Israel was unhappy with the content of those reports, that was a matter for him.

16. **Mr. Wax** (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, while maintaining that the current meeting was not the appropriate time or place to raise certain concerns, had just repeated the allegations made in his original statement.

17. **Mr. Awad** (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that he had no intention of politicizing a meeting of the Fifth Committee. His words had simply been a reflection of resolutions of the General Assembly and Security Council, and he urged the members of the Committee to review those resolutions, in order to refresh their memories on the matter of the crimes being perpetrated by Israel.

Agenda item 136: Programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 (*continued*)

Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (*continued*)

United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (A/72/7/Add.48 and A/72/371/Add.10)

18. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the revised proposed resource requirements for 2018 for the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) (A/72/371/Add.10), said that the General Assembly, in paragraph 41 of its resolution 72/262, had taken note of paragraph 17 of the report of the Advisory Committee (A/72/7/Add.15) and had decided to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding $50 million for the period from 1 January to 30 June 2018. The revised resources requirements amounted to $114.2 million net, representing a net decrease of $3.3 million compared to the approved resources for 2017. The reduction primarily reflected lower operational cost requirements because of proposed decreases under air transportation and facilities and infrastructure headings.

19. Recalling that the previous UNAMI budget proposal for 2018 (see A/72/371/Add.5) had been submitted for the consideration of the General Assembly in the autumn of 2017, she said that, while that proposal had indicated resource requirements of $111.0 million, and had reflected the same lower operational cost requirements contained in the present report, there had been an increase in requirements in the meantime of $3.2 million, attributable mainly to revised assumptions for civilian personnel costs, including salaries, and for common staff costs and danger pay for international staff.

20. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/72/7/Add.48), said that the Advisory Committee was recommending approval of the budget proposal, subject to minor reductions in staff costs, as it did not regard the reclassification of two positions from the P-4 level to the P-5 level to be sufficiently justified. The Advisory Committee was also recommending that the projected vacancy rates should be made to reflect actual rates, and that reductions should be made to the operational cost requirements for consultants and communications.

21. **Mr. Bahr Aluloom** (Iraq) said that his Government had made efforts to enhance stability and security, and to implement political, economic and social reform; to advance national and social reconciliation; and to achieve balanced relations with the other countries of the region, the world and the international community as a whole. Meanwhile, UNAMI had continued to provide assistance to Iraq in accordance with the mandate contained in Security Council resolution 2367 (2017). After having reclaimed its territory from ISIL, his Government looked forward to receiving more support from the Mission, which should play a variety of critical roles in the implementation of the United Nations response to help his Government and Iraqi society maintain peace and respond to citizens' needs, and should back the United Nations recovery and resilience programme. The latter aimed to strengthen vulnerable communities that had faced terrorism and extremism, and to enhance social harmony after Iraq, with the help of the international community, had met the great challenge of defeating ISIL.

22. The Government of Iraq strove to facilitate the work of UNAMI, and would lend full support to ensure that the Mission fulfilled its duties to Iraq, within the mandate conferred by the Security Council, in a stable security environment allowing it to reach the populations affected. The Government was committed to inclusive national dialogue, social cohesion and unity in Iraq. The best evidence of that commitment was that the Government had marshalled sufficient political will and consensus among Iraqi politicians for the adoption of the legal, organizational and institutional framework needed for the conduct of the elections held on 12 May 2018 and the maintenance of a security climate that allowed the elections to be held in a credible manner

throughout the territory of the country and with the participation of all Iraqis. In order to achieve the desired goals, UNAMI must be furnished with the necessary financial support, and its human resources must be managed effectively in line with those tasks. The financial resources allocated to activities related to the implementation of the Mission's mandate should be increased. The resource requirements of $114,195,400 for 1 January to 31 December 2018 proposed in the report of the Secretary-General reflected a net reduction of $3,349,800, or 2.8 per cent, compared with the resources approved for 2017. That risked undermining the Mission's ability to implement priority areas of its mandate and was not in line with the needs of the Iraqi people in the post-ISIL period, or with humanitarian needs in the reconstruction phase. The Government of Iraq welcomed the recommendation of the Advisory Committee in its report on the Mission at the seventy-first session (A/71/595/Add.5) that the Secretary-General should strengthen the Mission's national staffing complement by converting international staff positions to national staff positions.

23. While he wished to thank the Organization for reporting on UNAMI, he emphasized that the Secretary-General's reports should focus exclusively on financial and administrative matters, and should be free of political undertones that had no place in the deliberations of the Fifth Committee. His Government was grateful for the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and his team in Baghdad and New York to help the Government and people of Iraq, and looked forward to the Mission's work being covered by a clear mechanism for coordination with the United Nations country team and the Government of Iraq, in order to provide relief and humanitarian aid to Iraqis and build communities, particularly in the recovery period.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.